

THE ROLE OF THE CIA IN THE WORLD OF TODAY

ADDRESS BY SENATOR THOMAS J. DODD
BEFORE THE MID-CAREER DEVELOPMENT COURSE
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D. C.
TUESDAY, JUNE 1, 1965

I want to speak to you today about the nature of the world we live in, about the special role of your own Agency in this world, and about the relationship between your Agency and Congress.

The world today is not a very peaceful place.

In South Vietnam, the Government forces have, for more than four years now, been fighting against a merciless insurgency inspired and supported by Hanoi, and we are now committed, massively and irrevocably, to assist the South Vietnamese people in defeating this aggression.

In Laos, too, the Government has been under attack for more than four years by insurgent forces directed from Hanoi.

In the Dominican Republic, a communist grab for power was frustrated only by President Johnson's prompt and courageous intervention.

In Malaysia, Sukarno is pursuing his policy of confrontation and aggression, with the complete support of both Peking and Moscow.

In the Congo, within the past year, a communist insurgency that appeared to be on the verge of taking power was frustrated thanks to the energy and courage of Prime Minister Tshombe and thanks to the support which we gave him when he assumed office.

The chances are that the years to come will witness no serious improvement in this situation.

In Latin America, there is talk about the possibility of new communist coups in Colombia and Venezuela and Chile and other countries.

In Africa, the Chinese Communists and the Moscow Communists are vying with each other to see who can first subvert and control certain of the key countries.

In India and the Philippines, there is alarming evidence of increasing communist strength.

All of this does not bode too well for peace and stability over the coming decade.

Can Conciliationism Terminate the Cold War?

To be sure, there are some visionaries and romantics who tell us that the cold war can be liquidated and peace can be stabilized if only we are willing to be more trustful, less provocative, and more generous in our dealings with the communist states.

I wish that it were possible to put an end to the cold war simply by drinking a few swigs of this conciliationist soothing syrup. But any serious reading of the history of our times should be sufficient to demolish the simplistic estimates of our conciliationists.

The conciliationists may feel that their formula is new and untried. But the fact is that the approach they sponsor has been tried repeatedly in our dealings with the Nazis, in our dealings with the communists, and in our dealings with a variety of extremist dictators in Asia and Africa. And the fact is, further, that this approach -- call it conciliationism, call it appeasement, call it what you will -- has failed in every single instance in which it has been tried.

We tried this approach with Hitler at Munich; and the result was World War II.

(more)

- 2 -

We tried the conciliatory approach in our dealings with the Soviets during World War II; and the result was the forceable communization of Eastern Europe.

We sought to conciliate Sukarno by giving him some \$500,000,000 worth of foreign aid and by supporting his demand for West New Guinea; and the result has been the wholesale confiscation of American businesses, attack after attack on American Embassy installations, and now the confrontation with Malaysia.

For more than a year and a half after Castro took power, we pursued the path of conciliation in our dealings with him. Until June of 1960 we continued to pay him a sugar subsidy that averaged \$11,000,000 per month.

For this show of restraint and conciliation, the payment we received was first, the complete communization of Cuba; second, the Cuban missile crisis; and third, Castro's massive subversive operation directed against the free countries of Latin America.

I could go on and on with this listing, but I don't want to bore you. The evidence, indeed, is so overwhelming that I simply fail to see how any rational person can believe that the cold war will go away if only we were willing to display a more conciliatory attitude towards the communists.

For a Policy of Positive Containment

Although it is impossible to be optimistic about the immediate future, I do not believe that the cold war is bound to go on forever; nor do I believe that we have no alternative but to accept every communist cold war victory, past, present or future, as permanent and irreversible.

If we give ground before the communists -- if, for example, we act on the advice of our appeasers and conciliationists and abandon Vietnam and Southeast Asia -- then I think the future is bleak indeed.

To me, it is unthinkable that either Moscow or Peiping will ever abandon the path of aggression and subversion so long as aggression and subversion pay off.

Any retreat before communism, therefore, any concession made to it in the name of avoiding escalation, can only have the result of encouraging the communists to further aggression, and of bringing about the very escalation which the appeasers and conciliationists seek to avoid.

If, on the other hand, we can hold the line against further communist expansion and severely punish every such effort at expansion, it is my belief that, with the passage of years, this continuing containment would weaken the extremists in both Moscow and Peiping and would strengthen the hands of the more moderate element that unquestionably exists in both countries.

In the current debate on Vietnam, I have been disturbed to find Dr. Hans Morgenthau, for whom I have, up until now, had the greatest respect, lined up with those who urge withdrawal from Vietnam.

Dr. Morgenthau is neither an appeaser nor a conciliationist. He has on most cold war issues been a man of eminently sound judgment. For example, I am in wholehearted accord with his view that we should make political concessions from the communists a condition of increased East-West trade. But in the case of Vietnam, Dr. Morgenthau apparently feels that our position is unrealistic because we cannot make any solution in Vietnam stick unless we are prepared to go to war with Red China.

I think the best answer to Dr. Morgenthau would be the example of South Korea. There we inflicted a decisive defeat on communist aggression, and the solution we achieved in Korea, although far from ideal, has at least held fast for some thirteen years now.

(more)

- 3 -

If we can inflict a similar defeat on communist aggression in Southeast Asia, if we can purchase a pause of ten years or fifteen years or twenty years in this area, if we can hold the line against the expansion of communist power at other points, then there is at least reason to hope that the extremists in Moscow and Peiping will be discredited by their successive defeats, and that somewhat more moderate elements will come to the helm.

Short of accepting total defeat on the installment plan, I see no plausible alternative to this policy of positive containment.

The Nature of the Communist Offensive

Lenin instructed his followers to prepare for an era of wars and revolutions.

But the wars we are involved in today, and the wars we shall have to fight over the coming period, are different from the wars of the past in a very fundamental way.

The wars of the past were for the most part fought with military weapons for military objectives. They were uncomplicated and relatively easy to follow, and where the war stood at any given moment was pretty well determined by the position of the front line.

The so-called wars of national liberation, which constitute the heart of communist subversive strategy, are infinitely more complex and more difficult to deal with.

There are no front lines in these wars. And the military arm of the communist conspiracy plays a much smaller role in these wars than does its political arm.

To take over a country or a territory by purely military means requires masses of men and equipment. Moreover, attempted military takeovers run the danger -- as the communists discovered in Korea -- of solidifying world public opinion behind the victim.

But, employing the arsenal of political weapons which they have forged in almost four decades of experience, the communists have demonstrated that it is possible, with relatively small numbers of men and a small investment of funds, to completely disorganize the life of a country or even to take it over.

There were only a handful of communists in the Castro movement before he came to power. The evidence is indisputable, moreover, that the overwhelming majority of those who were anti-Batista were also anti-communist. But Castro and his handful of communists were able to take over the Cuban revolution, pervert this revolution for freedom into a communist dictatorship, and ruthlessly suppress the anti-communist majority.

In the case of the Panama riots of January, 1964, it is my understanding that the chief incitation came from 45 identified communist agents, of whom 18 had received training in Cuba.

And only within the last few weeks in the Dominican Republic we have again seen how a small group of trained professional revolutionaries can infiltrate and seize control of what started out as a popular revolution.

In his historic speech before the Society of Newspaper Editors after the Bay of Pigs disaster, President Kennedy gave a classic description of this new kind of warfare.

He said that we face a relentless struggle in every corner of the globe that goes far beyond the class of armies or even nuclear armaments.

He warned that conventional and nuclear arms are only a shield behind which the communists operate by means of subversion, infiltration and other underhanded tactics.

(more)

- 4 -

He said that in this way the communists had been able to occupy vulnerable areas in the free world, one by one, in a manner which made armed intervention extremely difficult.

Finally, he warned that our national security might be lost piece by piece, country by country, without the firing of missiles or the clash of arms.

The Role of the CIA

But while the existence of this kind of warfare has been recognized by virtually every authority and by government officials, I fear that we have not done as much as we should do to equip our side with the political know-how and political weapons essential to fight and win this kind of war.

Thanks to those whose foresight was responsible for the establishment of the Central Intelligence Agency, we have at least made a beginning in this direction.

The CIA, as is common knowledge, has two distinct functions. Its first function is the gathering and evaluation of intelligence. Its second function is to conduct covert operations that have been authorized by the National Security Council.

This combination of functions has opened your Agency to all kinds of criticism.

On the one hand, there are those who say that ours is an open society, that clandestine operations are immoral and that the operational role of the CIA should be eliminated, no matter what the communists themselves may do.

On the other hand, there are those who accept the need for covert operations to deal with the covert operations of international communism, but who argue that the CIA should be stripped of its operational functions, either because it is too powerful, or because a separation of functions would make for greater efficiency.

In an open society, any government organization engaged in secret and clandestine operations is bound to invite criticism.

When this organization is looked upon by the communists as a prime target, and when the communist propaganda apparatus is instructed to go all out against it, it can be taken for granted that the communists will ultimately succeed in inspiring criticism of this organization from completely respectable non-communist sources; yes, and even from impeccably anti-communist sources.

And when this organization, because of the limitations imposed by the requirements of secrecy, cannot speak up in its own defense, even totally unfounded and reckless criticisms are bound to achieve some currency and gain some credence.

It was to this situation that President Kennedy addressed himself when he spoke to the CIA personnel at their headquarters in Langley, Virginia, on November 28, 1961.

"Your successes are unheralded," said President Kennedy. "Your failures are trumpeted.... But I am sure you realize how important is your work, how essential it is -- and, in the long sweep of history, how significant your efforts will be judged. So I do want to express my appreciation to you now, and I am confident that in the future you will continue to merit the appreciation of our country, as you have in the past."

I have not hesitated to disagree with your Agency on certain points in the past, and by the nature of things, I take it for granted that there will be some points of disagreement in the future as well.

(more)

- 5 -

The Record will show, for example, that I disagreed with the estimate of your Agency's consultant on the Advisory Committee on Export Control when he approved the decision to export ultra-high precision miniature ball-bearing machines to the Soviet Union. And, despite the formidable powers which are sometimes credited to your Agency, I am happy to be able to report to you that President Kennedy accepted the findings of the investigation which I conducted, and ordered the shipment of the ball-bearing machines canceled.

But I have seen something of the work of your Agency, and I have met with your Field Representatives in [redacted] countries in Europe and Asia and Africa. STAT

And I speak from personal knowledge when I say that this country and the entire free world owes your Agency and its personnel a very great debt of gratitude -- far, far greater than most people realize. STAT

But here again, if what has been said about the role played by your Agency is true, I truly believe that you deserve the gratitude of every American and every freedom-loving person.

Your Agency came in for much misdirected criticism over the U-2 affair.

Unquestionably a case could be made against the manner in which it was handled once it broke.

But the manner in which it was handled was determined not at your level, but at the highest level of government.

And what was overlooked in all the excitement about the U-2 incident was the fact that as a result of the foresight and initiative of your Agency, U-2 photographic reconnaissance planes had been overflying the Soviet Union, without incident of any kind, for a period of four years, gathering information of vital importance to the security of the free world.

For this, too, I believe, your Agency deserves a vote of thanks.

Coming down to the immediate present, the effectiveness of your Agency has again been demonstrated in the Dominican Republic crisis.

As is now common knowledge, the Dominican Republic was only hours away from a complete communist takeover when President Johnson decided to intervene.

This decision could not have been made if the intelligence that had reached him was incomplete, or if it had reached him late.

Here again your Agency performed the function which has been assigned to it in a manner that effectively served our national interest.

I come back to the point that we live in an era of subversion and violence, an era characterized by massive subterranean operations and by so-called wars of national liberation.

There is every reason to believe that the tempo and intensity of the cold war will increase rather than decrease over the coming years.

(more)

- 6 -

Indeed all the present indications suggest that at least for some time to come we can expect to be confronted with crisis after crisis, each crisis posing the danger of a communist takeover in still another country.

Under these circumstances it is only reasonable to assume that the demands made on your Agency will be greater than ever before and that our national security will, more than ever before, depend on the ability of your Agency to discharge the functions assigned to it, both in the realm of intelligence and in the increasingly important realm of covert defensive operations against communist aggression and communist insurgency.

I do not accept the argument that your Agency has been a power unto itself, functioning without the knowledge of Congress or the Administration.

I happen to know better than this.

I know that the operations of your Agency have been reviewed on five occasions by Commissions appointed by the President.

I know, too, that your operations are conducted with the approval and knowledge of the National Security Council and with the approval and knowledge of four separate Subcommittees of the Senate and House.

On these Subcommittees are men like Senator Russell, Senator Stennis, Senator Hayden and Senator Saltonstall, and Congressman Rivers, Congressman Mahon and Congressman Bates.

I have complete confidence in the judgment and integrity of these senior members of the Senate and House.

I do not believe that a Joint Congressional Committee of the CIA could perform the function of supervision any more effectively.

Nor do I believe that knowledge about the details of your Agency's operation should be more broadly disseminated than it now is.

Nor do I believe that anything can be gained, in terms of efficiency or in terms of control, by separating the operational function from the intelligence function, as some people have proposed.

On the contrary, I am profoundly convinced that covert operations in the interest of freedom can most effectively be conducted when these operations are organically combined with the careful processing of intelligence that must govern their conduct.

The challenge that confronts you is great. Your responsibility is enormous.

Indeed, in the absence of all-out war, it may very well be that your Agency will constitute our first line of defense in the battle against communist subversion throughout the world.

In shouldering this responsibility, you can expect to receive far more abuse than plaudits.

You can expect an intensified barrage of attacks and charges and planted articles by the communist propaganda apparatus, with its countless outlets, and its infinite subtleties.

You may also expect challenges, critiques, and repeated demands for a reduction of the Agency's functions and power from decent citizens, yes, and from members of Congress, who have not yet come to accept the harsh necessity of clandestine operations to counter the clandestine operations of the communist apparatus.

You can, in short, expect little gratitude and much abuse.

But the consolation you may have is the certain knowledge that you are serving the interests of your country and the interests of world freedom, and the confidence that history will confirm this.

* * * * *